DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 437 714 EA 030 185

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TITLE	Special Education Law: A Review and Analysis. FOCUS on Legal Issues for School Administrators, 1999.
INSTITUTION	Educational Research Service, Arlington, VA.
PUB DATE	1999-00-00
NOTE	20p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Educational Research Service, 2000 Clarendon Blvd., Arlington, VA 22201-2908 (Stock Number 0341, $16). Tel: 800-791-9308 (Toll Free); Fax: 800-791-9309 (Toll Free); Web site: http://www.ers.org; e-mail: ers@ers.org.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Compliance (Legal); Court Litigation; Educational Administration; Elementary Secondary Education; Legal Responsibility; *School Law; *Special Education; State of the Art Reviews; Student Welfare
IDENTIFIERS	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

ABSTRACT

This review explains special education law in a manner comprehensible for educators who may be unfamiliar with the many statutes, regulations, and cases in this area of law. It provides a brief history of special education law with an emphasis on court cases and legislation that established the rights of children with disabilities. It examines the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the law's intent to ensure that all children with disabilities receive a free, appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services. The report looks at issues of eligibility; the identification and evaluation of students; individualized education programs; appropriate placements and related services, such as transportation, corrective, and other supportive services; and the early identification and assessment of disabling conditions in children. The text discusses procedural protection of children with disabilities and what the law requires in the areas of discipline, transition services, graduation and competency exams, and cost issues. The review examines Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and its implications for students and school employees. A short description of the Americans with Disabilities Act is also provided. By studying the fundamental legal principles of these laws, educators may acquire a working knowledge of the laws and their application in schools. (RJM)

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